



record research

30 CENTS

THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD STATISTICS AND INFORMATION



Frank Banta About 1930



Frank Banta 1959



RECORD RESEARCH

THE MAGAZINE OF RECORD STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

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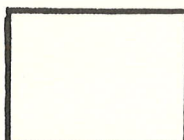
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LUCKEY ROBERTS ROLLOGRAPHY

Mike Montgomery

Following is a list of the five known rolls played by Charles Luckeyth Roberts, more usually known as Luckey Roberts. Luckey was born August 7, 1893 and currently resides in New York City. He was 26 years old when he first began making player piano rolls in 1919. The release dates shown were calculated from original Vocalstyle catalogs. The QRS rolls indicate the month and year of issue on the label. All these rolls are in the collection of Michael Montgomery, 722 Spring St., Ann Arbor, Michigan. They represent some of the first Negro jazz piano rolls ever made. James P. Johnson has the distinction of having made the earliest in 1917.

It is interesting that the Vocalstyle label, which was primarily engaged in producing "song" rolls, with the words printed along the side, was the one to first record Luckey Roberts. All these rolls have the words included on the roll, but the words are definitely subordinated by the marvelous piano solos contained here. If any further evidence exists that Luckey made more rolls than are listed here, please contact Mike Montgomery at the above address.

May 1919

Vocalstyle 11356 RAILROAD BLUES (Washington & Roberts)
September 1919

Vocalstyle 11463 IRRESISTIBLE BLUES (Tutt & Roberts)

November 1919

Vocalstyle 11490 BLUE FEVER (Tutt & Roberts)

July 1923

QRS 2287 ROSETIME AND YOU (Rogers & Roberts)

August 1923

QRS 2306 MO'LASSES - One Step (Rogers & Roberts)

BLUES RESEARCH No. 4

Messrs. Rotante and Sheatsley announce the forthcoming publication of BLUES RESEARCH NO. 4 which shall cover the fascinating R&B/Jazz label, SAVOY.

You can obtain this issue by remitting 30¢ to Record Research, 131 Hart St., Brooklyn 6, N.Y.

For those readers who have not obtained the first three issues may we advise that a limited number still remain, and can be secured at 30¢ each.

BLUES RESEARCH is a vehicle for exploring the vast field of contemporary blues recordings.

THIS IS WILLIAM D. GANT

by Mike Lipskin and Len Kunstadt

To those who frequent "Frank Cerutti's," a fashionable Madison Avenue cocktail lounge located in the upper 60s in New York City, he's just plain Willie Gant, a small robust man with a broad catching winning smile who plays a gang of piano, most everything, and sings an infectious ballad, most anything. Those of us who go back away know him as a sensational stride pianist whose reputation was on a par with the greatest. He was a mean 'cutter' of the first order. The 20s was his era and the New York City environs, his battleground. Gant makes no bones that James P. Johnson was his teacher, inspiration and idol and it was Jimmy who passed that lethal striding quality onto him, and he's never forgotten it. Today, on occasion, his piano will roar out a stride piece of yesteryear.

We had the pleasure not only to hear Willie's piano many times but also to extensively chat with him. He's a wealth of legends, information and music. He has told us many tales about the great striders such as Abba Labba, Eubie Blake, Fred K. Bryant, Lippy, Corky, Don Lambert, Fats Waller, and the man who Willie says "was not such a big talker," Jelly Roll Morton. He remembers who cut who in the bars and cabarets. He and Don Lambert had some great contests. He can tell you about Willie the Lion, the Beetle, Luckey Roberts and his society orchestras, Art Tatum, and Cliff Jackson. He could spend a full day just reminiscing about James P. Johnson.

Willie's pianistics is something to talk about too. As has been mentioned previously, Willie's repertoire is large and varied, composed not only of the latest hits, but those nostalgic tunes of yesteryear. This has made him a perennial favorite at Cerutti's. Yet, when Willie feels his way clear, he'll search into his exciting past and his nimble fingers will dig out a fascinating rag for us to hear. There's many in the audience who wait just for this moment, and it's their introductory applause that gives him the incentive to open up. We shall list here as many of the old rags that we remember having heard him play.

Pork and Beans, Junkman Rag - Luckey Roberts: He enjoys playing Pork and Beans more than many of the others because of its beautiful chord progressions. Both of these rags were written before 1920 (Junkman Rag was written in 1911).

An unidentified piece by Eubie Blake: Willie plays one old slow piece composed by Eubie long before he wrote 'Memories Of You' and 'I'm Just Wild About Harry'. This piece has very interesting left hand configurations, unfortunately Willie doesn't remember the name of it.

Harlem Strut, F Sharp Rag, Carolina Rag, Steeple Chase Rag (Over The Bars), Daintiness Rag, all by James P. Johnson: He considers James P. a great musical genius and can play those rags only in part because of lack of memory. Willie says that James P.'s rags were so hard to play that only the master himself was able to play them perfectly. The proof of James P.'s greatness was that all the pianists used to cut each other by trying to play his rags properly.

Unidentified rags of Willie 'The Lion' Smith: We were amazed to hear these fantastic rags that the Lion doesn't remember himself. One starts in B Flat and goes into E Flat the way Gant plays them. It is rumored that The Lion used to play them in B Major and E Major which are extremely hard keys. The reason for this was that he didn't want the young kids "stealing his stuff."

An unidentified rag of Ralph Rawson: We're not sure of the correct spelling of his name. Willie The Lion has made a recording of this piece in France in 1950 (Vogue #5038). It is similar to Harlem Strut.

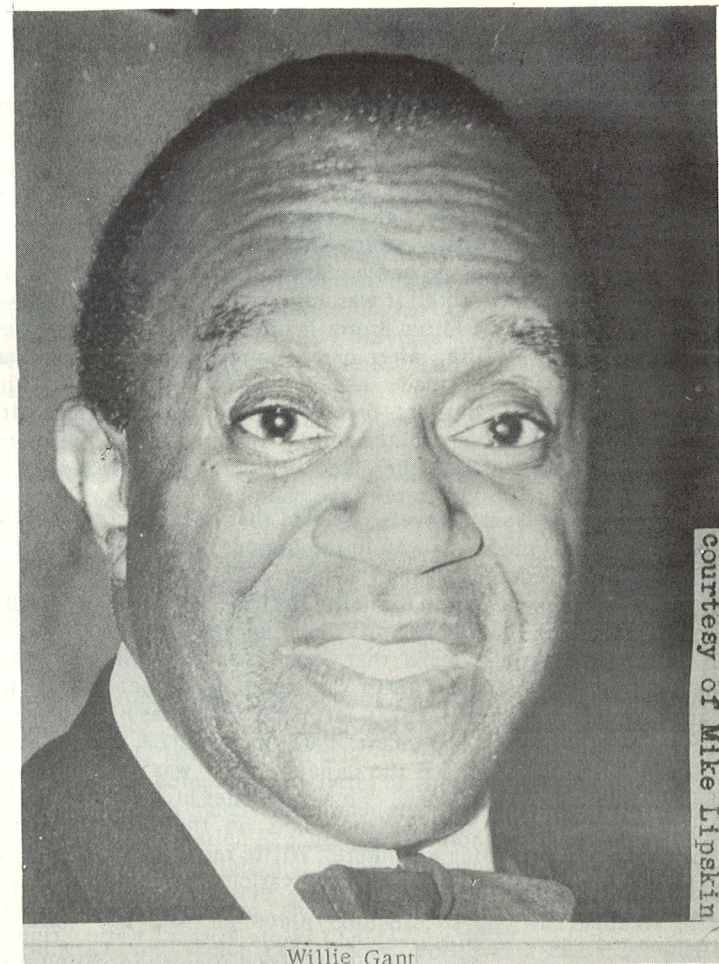
An unidentified rag of Joe Gordon: This item is played in E Major and the introduction was copied by Art Tatum on 'The Shout' (Decca 468). We understand that Joe Gordon is now driving a bus on Madison Ave. here in N. Y. C.

Gant also does excellent imitations of his fellow pianists. Two of his favorites are Fat Dan Cary and Willie The Lion. His pantomime of The Lion is hilarious.

NOW, FOR A TINTYPE OF GANT'S HISTORY

As a boy, he worked in the Brill building for the Brill Bros., whose building now houses many music publishing companies that circulate the bulk of the tin pan alley tunes. At that time Willie lived in Hells Kitchen. He had already begun to play the piano and his fame spread to many neighborhoods. Willie had had the opportunity when he was 13 to hear James P. Johnson already setting records at "Georgie Lee's" cabaret near 53rd Street and he was just waiting his chance to meet the great James P., with the whole hearted desire of studying with him. It wasn't long before Willie got his wish. James P. who was from the "Jungles" (around the 60s) had just won a piano contest on 47th street and Willie was in the cheering audience. It was here that they met and Willie asked him if he could study under him. James P. consented cheerfully after he heard Willie play one of his (Johnson) rags. James P., himself, was no more than a kid himself at this time (he had just begun to wear long pants) but according to Willie there was a mature brilliance in his piano playing that was ageless. He and another young pupil, Thomas "Fats" Waller were Johnson's students during this period and both of them would remark about James P.'s fine teaching aptitude of slowing down his rags so that they could learn them.

Willie became a professional about 1917. His first pro job was at the smart "Wm. Banks Cafe" on 23 W 133rd Street in NYC where as a solo pianist he played for an international set of people. A violinist, Johnny Mullins was added later. Such singers as Lottie Dempsey, Mamie Smith, Josephine Stevens, Bertha



Willie Gant

courtesy of Mike Lipskin



Lutice Perkins, d; Garvin Bushell, cl; Ed Cox, cor; Lillyn Brown, v; Demont, th; Willie Gant, p; John Mullins, vio.

'Chippie' Hill, Ethel Waters and Amelia Christmas held engagements during his tenure there.

About 1919, he left Banks, and Willie's next job was at Barron Wilkins, 134th Street and 7th Avenue. He, along with drummer, Harry Elliott supplied the accompaniment to such entertainers as Mattie Hite, Mary Straine and an unusual colored chap who could sing Italian songs with the best of the Italian tenors. Gant mentioned that beautiful Mary Straine was the first colored girl in a Ziegfeld production. Wilkins was a typical club of the era for slummers who wandered in anytime from 8 pm until. Barron Wilkins, himself, was not only an important cabaret business entrepreneur but he was a dominant outstanding figure in the entire Negro community.

Next stop for Gant was "Georgie Lee's" cabaret (1920/1921) (James P. got him the job) where he went to work, and this time, with his first band which consisted of Bub Miley (cornet); Eddie McKenny (dms); Meade (cigar box violin); Gant (piano). According to Willie, he remembers Miley already growling on his horn at this time. Bub came out of the Navy in 1919. The chap, Meade, played a cigar box, one string fiddle which was a vogue at this time. Meade was not a feature, he was a regular member of the group and accordingly filled his position very musically. Rags were a big part of the band's repertoire. Willie digressed for a moment and told us that a saloon during this era was synonymous with piano. Every place had a pianist, certainly a great era for piano players in New York. It was during this period that Gant sat in as the pianist on a Lillyn Brown Jazzbo Syncopators photo (see above photo). Willie, after carefully recalling the events, at the time that Lillyn made her pioneering recordings for the Emerson company, did not record the Emerson recordings with Lillyn. He just filled a place left by an absent pianist who was supposed to be on hand for the photo. Willie, jokingly remarked that he received \$25 just to take the photo.

Returning to Gant's travels, we find that he had left "Georgie Lee's" and he made his way to the famous nightery, "Leroy's", and there he fronted a band (from ca. 1921/1923) consisting of Gus Aiken, trumpet; Garvin Bushell, clarinet; Jake Frazier, trombone; Gant, piano; Spivy or Splivy, banjo; and Joe Banks, drums. It was this "Leroy's" band that Gant made his initial recording behind Amelia Christmas (Miss Christmas, to all her friends and fans) for the Gennett label in late 1921 (Arkansas Blues/I Ain't Givin' Nothin' Away - Gennett 4801, as by ELIZA CHRISTMAS LEE). Willie believes that the surname, Lee, was Amelia's husband's name. The name, Eliza, puzzles him. Gant recalls obtaining \$25 each for the musicians on the recording date. Following this recording adventure, Willie recalled doing several others behind different blues singers on various labels such as Okeh, Pathe and Black Swan with the "Leroy's" personnel. He believes that he may have recorded behind Lavinia Turner, Katie Crippen and Josie Miles, to name some. He has difficulty recalling who they were because of the rapid-fire treatment he used to get from many promoters who contracted him to supply a recording band at a minute's notice for a fast recording date with many blues

singers he never or seldom heard of. Gant considered Lavinia Turner as one of the great unsung blues singers who just never did get her due.

Willie left "Leroy's" about 1923 and hit the road with Sonny Thompson's Jazz Band (tenure: ca. 1923/1925). They played the vaudeville route in the Keith circuit which took them to many cities in the U.S. In the band was Leroy Rutledge, trumpet; Cuba _____, clarinet; Herb Gregory, trombone; Gant, piano; and Sonny Thompson, drums. Notices of their whereabouts and photos of the band appeared in many periodicals of that day. They were known as a fine hot jazz band but unfortunately for jazz history they never recorded. Tiring of the road, Willie Gant took his leave of Sonny Thompson, and formed a band which ultimately played New York's "Cotton Club" and "Small's Paradise" (tenure: ca. 1925/1927). This was to be the pinnacle in Willie Gant's bandstand era. Such sidemen as Ward Pinkett, Rex Stewart, Leroy Rutledge, Joe Williams (tmb), Happy Caldwell, Freddie Skerritt (reeds), Manzie Johnson were to grace the personnel roster during this period. An interesting review of the band at "Small's Paradise" appeared in the May 26, 1926 issue of "Variety."

SMALL'S PARADISE (HARLEM, NEW YORK) New York, May 22

This Harlem night club on Seventh Avenue and 135th Street, New York, continues as "the hottest place in town." If the former band aggregation was considered torrid, the new Willie Gant double quintet of sizzling jazzists are downright scorching.

Their music is irresistible and defies immobility when those colored musicians under the affable Gant's direction "sock out" that low-down syncopation.

Word-of-mouth plugging has made Small's an all-season playground. To see the "high hats" mingle with the native stepper is nothing unusual. Where formerly the dance floor was either all white, or all black, the races mix and the atmosphere permits for no class distinction.

The succession of colored "blues" specialists that come out from time to time makes little difference to the proceedings. The atmosphere and the band are the attractions. The girls merely plug the waits to give the jazzists a chance to ease up, and at that, the boys are going great guns in the indigo accompaniment.

What's more, the "take" is very reasonable and a good time is to be had at a nominal sum.

Gant reported recording several sessions during this period for Columbia, Pathe and Grey Gull with the band and also as a pianist with pick-up outfits. None of the recording are total solo endeavors and according to Gant these sessions were the last of his recordings. Owing to a lack of substantial statistical evidence these recordings are still in the realm of obscurity and are demanding of future research.

(continued on page 16)

AN INTERVIEW WITH FRANK BANTA

by Dick Holbrook

The VICTOR RECORD catalog of 1927 offered Help in Choosing Your First Records. Under Instrumental Solos, their very first recommendation for a popular piano artist was FRANK BANTA playing For My Sweetheart and Just a Little Longer on VI 20292. And a few pages on you find a list of ten piano solos he recorded for Victor. In the COLUMBIA RECORD catalog of 1924 are ten piano duets. Plus many more records for PATHE, VOCALION, BRUNSWICK, EMERSON, OKEH, BANNER and EDISON. And AEOLIAN Duo-Art piano rolls. What's the story of this versatile musician? Where is he today?

Well, if "today" is June 13th, 1960, FRANK BANTA is the featured entertainer in the reunion tent of the Class of 1931 of Dartmouth College, celebrating their Thirty-Won-Derful Thirtieth reunion one year early at Hanover, New Hampshire. And Frank, a chunky, hearty, white-thatched sixty-two, is making that piano "talk" as he recalls tune after tune of the years when this college class attended high school proms and silent movies and amusement park pavilions. And then, as income permitted, the later more expensive delights of roadhouse, cellar club or hotel ballroom. FRANK BANTA remembers all the tunes and most of the words and fakes what you've forgotten!

When and where were you born, Frank?

"I was born in New York City on September 28th, 1897. My father was a fine pop-style pianist, but I was too young to appreciate his art before he died in 1903. Father made Edison records in the '90s over in Orange, New Jersey. I have a pressing or a disc taken off an old cylinder record of a song Violets played by him, and he had quite some technique.

"He was among the first to take classics and put them into ragtime - such as Ragged William from the William Tell Overture. He wrote songs with JESS DANDY and was an early associate of the WITMARKS music publishing house. If they wanted to steal an unpublished song from a musical show or revue on Broadway, they would buy a pair of tickets for him and mother. He would copy down the melody on manuscript paper as the performer sang it, and submit same to publisher. In those days it was piracy. Today it's payola.

"Father was of slight stature and had a subtle sense of humor. Great natural talent. Composed, arranged and directed orchestra. He wrote a piece called Halimar, an oriental rondo which was quite popular in the '90s. Also a lancers which was danced as they do the La Raspa today called Children's Games. He died in November 1903. Musical geniuses seem to have had short lives. FELIX ARNDT died at age 28, GERSHWIN at 38, MOZART at 33 and SCHUBERT at 34. (And I don't mean LEE or JAKE)."

What was your own musical education, Frank?

"We lived in Yorkville. I studied under a local piano teacher named FRANK HAUSER from nine years of age to about fifteen. Hearing PAUL WHITEMAN's orchestra for the first time provided a real thrill. My next inspiration was FELIX ARNDT. I replaced him with FRED VAN EPS (Banjo Orchestra and Trio) at age seventeen playing dance dates and recording at age eighteen with VAN EPS TRIO on Victor. This was On the Dixie Highway (VI 18226) backed by Teasing the Cat. The trio consisted of banjo, saxophone and piano. Van Eps was among the first to recognize the saxophone as a "new sound". He would write obbligato in style of cello part as there were no sax parts published around 1914-1918. Van Eps is still alive in California at age eighty-three). For five or six years the extra pianist working for FRED VAN EPS was none other than GEORGE GERSHWIN. Imagine that great talent being my stand-in!"

So this was your first professional engagement?

"Oh no! My first job was a wedding I played at age of about fourteen with a fiddler for one dollar each. They were friends of the family and we worked about seven or eight hours. The next year I played in dancing school for weekly dances with a five-piece orchestra on 86th Street near Third Avenue. The side men got two dollars each. I was the leader and got paid two fifty."

What were some of your other records? Ones for which you got label credit?

"I recorded with HOWARD KOPP for Columbia. We did Money Blues and Calico Rag. This was a drum and piano duet. (The record was Co 2241 by HOWARD KOPP and FRANK E. BANTA. It predates the Original Dixieland Jazz Band's first sides on Columbia 2297 on May 31st, 1917) (They also recorded It Takes A Brown Skin Gal and One Step More on Co 2376).

CLIFF HESS and I did piano duets. Cliff died about three years ago. We recorded on Vocalion and on Columbia. I still have a couple. Not bad at all - considering they were made before electrical recordings. (The Columbia was 3535 - Remember the Rose and Roll On, Silvery Moon).

"There is a good piano and drum record of Prudy (my sister's name) with DAVE GRUPP on Pathe. I have it. (Frank also recorded with H. AKST on Co 2953, a piano duet of Ding Toes and Typhoon. And with JACK AUSTIN, another piano duet on Co 3687, of Bunch of Keys and Kitten on the Keys."

How about the solos, Frank?

"Yes, I did possibly twelve solo records on Victor including The Melody That Made You Mine" (and My Sugar on Vi 19705), Sweet Man and I Wonder Where My Baby is Tonight on Vi 19839, Sympathy and When the Red Red Robin on Vi 20085, For My Sweetheart and Just a Little Longer on Vi 20292, and Le Coucou and The Fantasia on Vi 20345. And a very fine Nola and Operatic Nightmare on Vi 20667).

And how about accompaniments?

"Yes - for HENRY BURR, RUDY WEIDOEFT and GEORGE GREEN. Gee, just thought of one called I Love a Piano by M.J. O'CONNELL vocalist in place of BILLY MURRAY. They called me at home to come right down to Columbia in 38th Street and I improvised on the spot. That sent my stock way up at age of about twenty or twenty-one. Nervous, yes, but young and unafraid.

"Also, I played for Brunswick under HAENSELIEN and BLACK. The Banner records were quite good under name of JIMMY ANDREWS with vocalist ARTHUR HALL. Looking at the World through Rose Colored Glasses was one.

Frank - who are your favorite pianists?

"In the style of classic jazz I like ART TATUM and FRANKIE CARLE. There are many others too numerous to mention, but I'll go with these two as my entry."

Did you do any records with FRANK CRUMIT?

"Yes. About three or four double discs. (Crumit has two dozen in the 1929 Victor catalog). Our mutual friend SAMMY HERMAN (a vibes specialist) played a kazzoo in a number with F.C. called Insufficient Sweetie. Sammy had nerve enough to steal a hot stove in those days."

Did you accompany Lillian or "Sister" Harris?

"Not Guilty. The only blues singer I accompanied was MAMIE SMITH on Okeh. I played with the house orchestra."

Did you record for Gennett?

"Yes - with the Taylor Trio. This was piano, violin and cello. We did several records. And I did a good solo record of Wild Cherry Rag and Cubist, a number that featured whole tone scale and was considered pretty ultra back there in the 1920s."

Banta is not a common name. I guess you were the only one around.

"No, there were the MUSICAL BANTAS from New Haven, Connecticut. No close relation. When vaudeville was dying, they probably helped to kill it!"

Have you composed any lyrics or music?

"I composed mostly instrumentals. The VAN EPS TRIO record of a one-step called Razzberries and along with PETER DeROSE wrote Prudy and Upright and Grand. Pete and I were kids together in Yorkville. Another great talent. He never learned to read music, but how he could compose. Prudy was made by NAT SHILKRET for Victor (21010 rev. Polly) with ZEZ CONFREY's name on it, but was actually played by MILTON RETTENBERG. Incidentally, we were a piano team on radio, but never made any recordings together."

(continued on page 9)

SOME JELLY ROLL MORTON VIGNETTES

by Harrison Smith

Malice in Blunderland

In 1924, when I made daily rounds of theatrical booking offices trying to peddle the talents of 'Sunshine Sammy', Josephine Baker, Arthur Gibbs Ork, Baron Lee and others, I happened to meet Pepi de Albrow, a tall, dark and handsome guy, member of a stage dance team, who then had aspiration of topping Valentino, ex-dancer, then famed movie star. Gals used to love giving Pepi a second look. The guy was always slickly attired and instead of inserting a flower in the buttonhole of his coat lapels he inserted tiny white mice. He must have had a mouse incubator! Winchell, Sullivan and other columnists gave him loads of publicity and liked to mention how the gals would snuggle up to his side and yell when they suddenly discovered a mouse laughing at them.

Time passed on as I read about his escapades here and abroad, as well as his teaming in an act with "The Dolly Sisters" famous dancers, who were then, always in the limelight, as the 'Gabor Sisters' are now. One day, in 1929, while strutting up Broadway with 'Mr. Jelly Lord' who was demonstrating how he could sell me The Palace Theatre, Pepi grabbed me by my coattail and renewed acquaintance. Said: He'd recently come from Monte Carlo, where he was entertainment director at the casino, that he'd caught Eddie South's Ork. in Paris and heard that I represented Eddie. Inquired if I could get him same styled unit, I told him that I had a road show edition of South's Ork by having 'George Francis & His Park Avenue Playboys', and that I would arrange an audition for his seeing and hearing it. Pepi advised his hotel residence.

While I was in Philadelphia that night, Jelly - always his own press agent - couldn't resist 'phoning Pepi at his hotel, to advise him, that I didn't know what it was all about - in spite of my building up The Duke - and that he would like to take over since I had to go out of town for a while. 'Jelly' must have done a goodsales job as Pepi gave in to him and an audition was arranged for following day.

The fly in the ointment was; evidently Jelly overlooked type of ork that was desired, because he came up with Wen Talbert's great but blasting Madison Square Garden Ork (12 musicians) which blasted for 6 Day Bike Races held at Garden for many years. Pepi certainly did not desire a tubist. Just 4 men were wanted.

On my return from Philadelphia - after contacting Francis - I 'phoned Pepi at his hotel and was advised that he was at a rehearsal at Grey's Studios on 49th Street. Nuff 'twas said and I dashed over to the studio to see what was happening - much to Jelly's surprise. Altho' audition program was in progress I pulled Pepi out of the place while Talbert's boys looked on in amazement. Pepi flabbergasted exclaimed; I don't understand that man: 'JELLY FISH! Thus endeth my long friendship with Pepi, and Jelly's dream of being 'The Man Who Broke The Bank At Monte Carlo'. All he got out of the deal was 'The Monte Carlo Blues'.

P.S. My good friend, the late Henri Saparo, New Orlenian, great banjoist, Bechet's real buddy and former member of Will Cooke's Syncopators was featured with Talbert Ork. Pepi's looks had nothing on his. Talbert was original stand-up pianist orchestra leader.

For contrast of feature, the late Tommy Christian, whom I helped to book for 100 straight weeks, directed on the stage by facing the audience, instead of his orchestra. Incidentally, I don't want to forget, Willie Creager, great director, whom I was associated with during our Gennett days. His vaudeville productions were dynamic.

I get a kick now reminiscing how I used to take Duke's Washingtonians to The Palace Theatre, NYC to learn stage department by watching 'Genial Jan' Garber and his Ork in action. Jan

was brokentearted because Victor wouldn't let him 'cut' my publication 'Tomboy Sue' and switched over to Columbia.

Here's news! Hector Marchese, great sax man, formerly with Arnold Johnson, Allen Roth, Ray Ventura, Barney Rapp composed lots of stuff, mailed lead sheets to himself to get U.S. Stamp cancelled on envelope as proof of authorship, hired Jelly to arrange same and then lost the envelope. Now Jelly's credited as author of 'Pontchatrain Blues', 'Pretty Lil', 'Sweet Substitute' Too bad same were not copyrighted properly, so take heed.

My Favorite Jelly Roll Story

During 1913-14-15, I was fortunate to see, hear and follow the fabulous Jenkins Orphanage Band (12) of Charleston, S.C. thru the streets of Brooklyn, N.Y. The orphanage was founded by a Rev. Jenkins, who took the band on national tours to raise funds for the institution.

With tattered misfit uniforms and beat up caps--each slanted at a crazy angle--the kids were a sight to behold as they played their instruments to the beat of shufflin' feet. They played all kinds of stuff but I like their rendition of 'Florida Blues' best. 2 kids were identical twins and their antics amused happy house-holders, office and factory workers who stopped activities and showered the band with coins and folded bills.

No doubt the band helped to influence my promotion of Jack Hatton's Orchestra those years. Hatton's sensational cornetist was the idol of jazz fans.

Time marched on and after 1st world war, the twins, with a reputation due to flashy drummer stuff, were featured with Lt. Jim Europe's 'Hell Fighters Band (50) which started nationwide tour at a SRO concert at Academy of Music, Brooklyn, about 1919, which I attended. I had all its fabulous Pathe Records and would not have missed it for anything. A concert feature was Sissle & Blake's musical recitation 'On Patrol In No Man's Land' with band accompaniment. Following date was at Boston and after first half of concert was completed, one of twins stabbed Europe to death. In tradition of show business, the show had to go on and Sissle, assistant director, took over and completed program. As drum major of the famous 15th Regiment of NYC, Sissle lead the band and regiment and gained fame for being first American soldier to set a foot on foreign soil during the war.

All of the nation's newspapers featured headlines:

LT. JIM EUROPE STABBED TO DEATH!

Pat. Casey, great theatrical mogul who booked the proposed tour billed it in circus billing style and had to burn up \$40,000 worth of lithographed bill posters.

I believe the drummer claimed self defense and only got 5 years time.

In 1928, I had Ellington under contract--which I sold in 1930--and took over 'Jelly Roll' Morton, whom I met during my association as adviser to Gennett. Having contacted with Ben. Bernie who featured my boy, Roy Evans as singer with his orchestra. I suggested that Bernie booking staff line up dates for Jelly. Jack Pettis was booked out of the office and the day Jelly and I fell in" Pettis was present and he raved to all about Jelly. Instead of me, Jack became the mouthpiece for Jelly. Jelly knocked off couple of tunes on the "Steinway" and we were sold.

I picked up an ork to audition for Jelly's consideration of fronting it and to my great surprise in it I found a guy I recognized. The recognition prompted me to act very diplomatic and due to smallness of audition place I was unable to tip Jelly. The ork was okay but the drummer wanted to be boss of it and pushed others around.

Jelly stood for his stuff as long as he could and finally in disgust grabbed him by his coat collar and said: "You think you're tough -- Who'd you ever kill?" The guy meekly replied "Jim Europe". After Jelly had coughed and recovered his composure, all he could say was: 'My, My, My'! His favorite expression when surprised.

The episode prompted me to postpone future interest in the ork indefinitely.

HUMOR ON RECORDS

by Sheldon Harris

Passenger: STEWARDESS! STEWARDESS! The wing is on fire!
Stewardess: That so?
Passenger: Yes, for God's sake look... a sheet of flame!
Stewardess: Coffee, tea or milk?
Passenger: We don't have time for coffee, tea or milk. We're Doomed!
Stewardess: Then how about a martini?

That's from Shelly Bermans' hottest selling record. (Inside Shelly Berinan, Verve MGM 15003). True, it's humor that is satirical, subtle, and sophisticated, but it's good, and it's selling fast. Today, humor on records is big business. The Lenny Bruces, the Mort Sahl's and the Shelly Bermans have hit the jackpot. It would be a fair estimate to say that the above record sold more than any 10, or for that matter. 50 previous 78 speed comedy records.

But good, clean, witty, comedy has been with us since Edison recited "Mary had a little lamb" on a full stomach. American minstrelsy of course was the grand daddy of it all, accounting for many of the situations and gags still told by some of our present day comedians. Since the recording business started somewhat past the prime years of minstrelsy, only a few good old, old timers performed their acts in front of the horn. Typical were the popular Golden and Hughes (Victor 17011A):

"How do you get the water in the mellons?"

"We plant them in the spring."

And Roger Harding, monologist (Victor-Monarch 3452):

"If love is blind, marriage is a good eye opener."

Overlapping into Vaudeville (and of course Burlesque) the mixture produced a wider range of subjects as well as some of America's funniest comedians. From the famous Two Black Crows, Moran & Mack (Columbia 1094D):

"My dog don't eat meat."

"Why not?"

"We don't give him any."

and again,

"We used to have two windmills on our farm. But there wasn't enough wind for two, so we took one down."

Another duo, patterned after the Crows; the Black Jacks (Victor 21054):

"Will your dog follow a scent?"

"No. Nothin' under a dime."

Harry Hershfield (an encyclopedia of comedy) was making dialect records in the 1920's (Columbia A2907)

"When you sold me that store you said thousands passed by daily. You were right. They all passed by."

Monologists fared very well on early records. They still do. The telephone (and its early confused mysteries) became an excellent device for a record single. The format was eventually adapted by George Jessel and much later by Shelly Berman. From one of the mahy "Cohen on the Telephone" record series (Joe Hayman, Columbia 3D):

"I worship the very ground your husband left you."

and another,

"My girl weighs 250 pounds. She's built for comfort, not for speed."

Prohibition, radio, talkies, and then depression, caused a big loud demand for fun. Comedians supplied the demand well. Patter and music by Phil Baker (Victor 20970):

"You're crazy."

"Maybe."

"I'll bet you \$100 you're crazy."

"I'm not that crazy."

And the inimitable W.C. Fields (United Artists, Album 600):

"Back in my rummy days I would tremble and shake for hours upon arising. It was the only exercise I ever got."

And how can anyone overlook Jimmy Durante? (Majestic 1059A):

"My neighborhood was so tough that anybody wid ears was a cocker-spaniel."

Not forgetting of course Bert Williams, Eddie Cantor, Burns and Allen, and so many, many more wonderful artists.

Dialects have been with us since the first Indian burped, Minstrels adapted the so-called Negro dialect (since gone with other such stereotypes). The Jewish dialect has been around since Vaudeville, especially so with the popular "Cohen on the Telephone" series (Joe Hayman, Ralph Bingham, Barney Bernard and others). This was extended through early Sam Levinson, ("Today I am a fountain pen" - Apollo 156), to Menasha Skulnik, Mickey Katz and the wonderful story teller Myron Cohen. Buddy Hackett scored well with his Chinese waiter character ("All Amelicans look alike" - Coral 61105). Other dialecticians such as Harry Lauder, Weber & Fields, and scores of newcomers, point out the success of this type of humor.

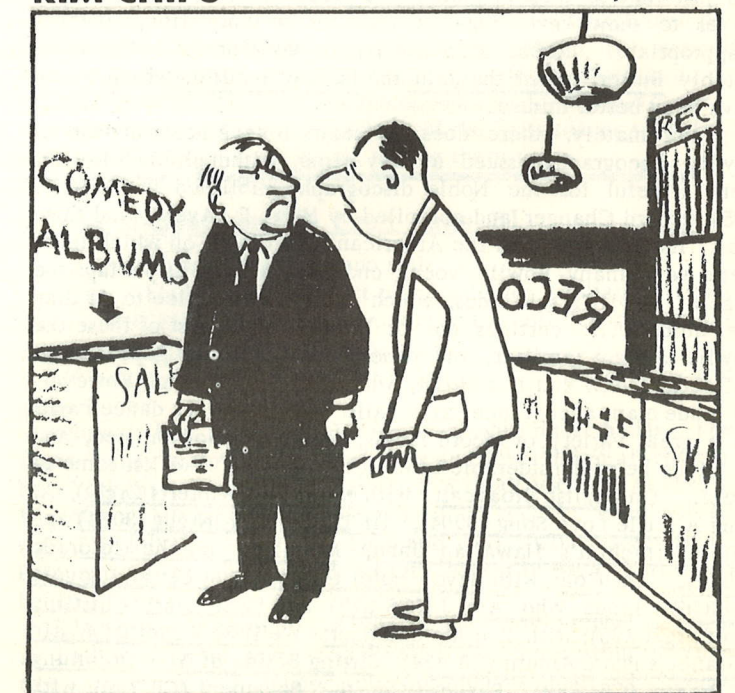
Novelty comedy has always had a market, beginning with the famous Okeh Laughing Record (Okeh 4678A) to Spike Jones, Stan Freeberg, and the "Bloopers" series. Extending this type further, we have today the offbeat humor of Irwin Corey and Theodore; and one step beyond that, the weird monologues of Shorty Patterstein ("The water in my brain is sizzling around...") (World Pacific WPM 412). There seems to be no limit to humor on records. People will always laugh at good talent, and we've never yet had a shortage.

Eddie Lawrence, the Old Philosopher said (Coral CRL 57203):

"He who follows in his fathers footsteps, stands right behind him at the unemployment insurance office."

This is certainly not true in todays Humor Record market. The "sons" are following the "fathers," and are doing it pretty darn good.

RIM CHIPS



"I'm sorry sir. We cannot refund your money because you already heard the jokes."

john mc andrew

STAR

STUDD

SHELLAC



THE GREAT AL BOWLLY

Two or three years ago HMV issued a tribute to him in the form of an EP and they called it that: The Great Al Bowllly, which perhaps, describes him best of all. The number? 7EG8186, and it contains A Little White Gardenia, The Very Thought of You, By the Fireside and Close Your Eyes. The notes on the cover quote a 1934 critic with proclaiming, "Bing Crosby's most dangerous rival, 'which is a left-handed compliment, indeed, as Bowllly was superior to Crosby in every way -- range, timbre, expression and interpretation. From the first Bowllly records to the very last, there was never any lessening of effort and vigor, no diminution of tone quality or the richness of heart that he gave to every song he sang. He did every type of popular and standard song, and there never was one that made you feel he was out of his depth, as was Bing with Lehar (Yours is My Heart Alone), Herbert (Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life), Kern (Old Man River) or Gershwin (Embraceable You). You know instinctively that Bowllly would have done all of these impeccably. My first introduction to Al Bowllly, as was almost everyone else's on this hemisphere, was via the first HMV Noble sides that Victor released here. Paradoxically, the very first one irritated me despite the obviously excellent vocal because it was one of those traps that Noble was wont to jump into deliberately and which I invariably deplored: an essentially instrumental piece on which he insisted on including a vocal: Lady of Spain, which I believe to this day would have been flawless without it, and was almost perfect in spite of it. It's like putting words to Nola and The Glow Worm, and the fact that they did just that to these hapless piano pieces in recent years simply serves to show how desperate they are for innovation, however inappropriate. Noble used Bowllly on some others in this vein, notably Butterflies in the Rain and Lady of Madrid, which would have been better unsung.

Unfortunately, there does not seem to have been any sort of Bowllly discography issued at any time, although his followers were grateful for the Noble discography published in the June, 1951 Record Changer and compiled by Harry E. Avery, and this, alas, includes none of the American recordings, on which there were very many Bowllly vocal choruses, as well as perhaps the best of Bowllly's solo sides, which do far more justice to Al than the other U.S. cuttings do for Noble. With most of these the Bowllly fans are familiar, and although there may be gaps in their collections they know, at least, what they are missing. However, Al made many appearances as vocalist with numerous dance bands on a great variety of record labels, as often as not unlisted, and it might be of considerable interest to the faithful to list some of them. On English Broadcast, with Marius B. Winter's Orch., Al sang A Little Love Song (3004), All Through the Night (3034) and with Ferrachini's Hawaiian Band, Moonlight on the Colorado (3018). On CoE: with Savoy Hotel Orpheans, Sweet and Lovely (CB376), Linda/Who Am I (CB 377) and Sweetheart/Whistling Waltz (CB 425); with The Masqueraders: We'll Be Together Again /Granny's Photo Album (CB 434), Sitting Beside of You/Dreaming a Dream (CB 789), Shadows on the Pavement (CB 792); with Reginald Williams and His Futurists: We Speak of You Often/Small Town (FB 2226) and What Do You Know About Love/Talk to Me; (FB 2227). On DeE., with Arthur Lally's Orch: We've Got the

Moon and Sixpence/Is I In Love? I Is (F 3066), DeE F3723 is called The Bands That Matter, and on it Bowllly sings Don't Blame Me (with Hylton), Isn't It Heavenly (with Lew Stone) and Lazy* bones (with Roy Fox). On DeE K645 "Songs of the Shows", the Bowllly contribution is It Happened in Monterey and he's with the chorus doing My Baby Just Cares for Me. Likewise, on O. K. Decca (DeE K 684), on which you also get samples of Gertrude Lawrence, Edy the Baker, Lew Stone, Rudy Starita and Nat Gonella, Bowllly is on Happy-Go-Lucky-You and Broken-Hearted Me. A similar but less interesting The Decca A-B-C (DeE K 714) includes just a few bars of Al on You Must Believe Me.

On the English version of the Durium records that flourished briefly in the early thirties, as recently detailed on these pages, many sides turned up Al Bowllly vocals, including eight that were not included in the magazine's Hit of the Week compilation: All of Me/Save the Last Dance for Me (EN-8), Auf Wiedersehen, My Dear/Rain on the Roof (EN-12), I Lost My Heart in Heidelberg /Goodnight, Little Girl, Goodnight (EN-15) and Too Many Tears/When Yuba Plays the Rhumba (EN-23).

Bowllly made a flock of sides with Geraldo and His Orchestra after his return to England in the late thirties, including Heart & Soul/When Mother Nature Sings Her Lullaby (BD 5427), My Own/You're as Pretty as a Picture (BD 5444), If Ever a Heart/They Say (BD 5448), One Day When We Were Young/I'm in Love with Vienna (BD 5449); and two Jazz sides with Ken 'Snakehips' Johnson & His West Indian Orch., a la the Bob Crosby stuff of the same period: Blow, Thou Winter Wind/It Was a Lover and His Lass (BD 5592). For HMV also, Al did a number of solo stints: Marie/Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen (BD 493), Goodnight, Angel/When the Organ Played 'Oh Promise Me, (BD 565), Romany/Lonely (BD 666), Au Revoir But Not Goodbye/Moon Love (DB 762), and, duetting with Jimmy Mesene, Only Forever/Ferryboat Serenade (BD 892).

While he essayed the same songs that Crosby, Como, Columbo, Vallee and the other favorites of the day were doing, no matter how soft and sentimental the material was, Bowllly's renditions always had a vibrancy and fire that was usually completely lacking in the others, and for flexibility and range and type of song none of the others could match him, and his tones had the holding quality of the more serious tenors, which Crosby also had until relaxing caught up with him in 1934. Better than that, each recording was a well-thought-out interpretation of the story it told, not merely a stereotyped repeat of the last one and in the same key. You have only to refer to several of his totally different selections to find the same excellence in widely divergent types of song: Basin Street Blues (as good as the deservedly vaunted Teagarden original with B.G.), A Little White Gardenia, You and the Night and the Music, Ev'rything's Been Done Before, Blue Moon, Red Sails in the Sunset, Wherever You Are, It Was So Beautiful, My Romance, Love Locked Out, Everything I Have is Yours, You Ought to Be in Pictures, Judy, and many others, all as soloist; his vocal choruses were practically beyond enumeration; but the few that stand out in my mind above all of the outstanding cameos would have to include Nightfall, In the Still of the Night (Carmichael), Blue Prelude, That's What Life is Made Of, Love Tales, Music, Maestro, Please, You Ought to See Sally on Sunday, Wedding Bells are Ringing for Sally, which, with the Roy Fox Band, is backed with a superb and obscure version of Star Dust but with no vocal; Where Am I, Love is the Sweetest Thing, Blues in My Heart, By the Fireside, Who Walks In When I Walk Out, I've Got You Under My Skin... but I could keep going on indefinitely. The orchestras involved were largely Noble, Fox, and Stone.

Amongst the least known Bowllly sides, it seems to me, are Adeline (Imp 2355, with Jay Wilbur Ork.), Tango Lady (Mayfair-2031, Argentine Tango Ork.), Waltz You Saved for Me (RegE MR 375-Maurice Winnick Ork.). Some collectors are unaware of two solos and two choruses on American Decca recorded here while the singer was here with Noble: Be Still, My Heart/If I Had a Million Dollars (De 293) and, with Victor Young on Say When/When Love Comes Swingin' Along (De 278).

(continued on page 24)

EDISON

Ray Wile

THE EDISON RECORDINGS OF MARGARET MATZENAUER

The present discography of the Edison recordings of Margaret Matzenauer was prepared late last spring and was scheduled for Record Research before the appearance of the complete Matzenauer discography in the September 1960 issue of Hobbies. There is so much in the way of additional information and corrections that we are presenting the discography as originally scheduled.

It takes a great deal of effort & experience to successfully ferret out all the information scattered in the old Edison files. As yet, we have not located (Music Room) reports on most of the recordings; the reports of the New York recording studios before 1926; the advertisement department flimsies for masters that were never coupled; nor the reports of Edison's foreign activities other than those for London 1913-1914.

Edison's comments (from the Voice Trials File)

"Good voice - has a little tremolo on some notes. Fine singer. Accom. not good." Based on hearing Victor 88363 - Favorita - O mio Fernando.

Recorded in New York, 1915 & 16.

Date	Matrix	Title	Takes	Disposition	Other issues.
------	--------	-------	-------	-------------	---------------

Discs

- | | | |
|---------|------|--|
| 2/19/15 | 3593 | Orfeo ed Euridice - Che faro senza Euridice. Takes A, B Hold. Finally rejected and made over on 4603. |
| 2/19/15 | 3594 | Samson et Dalila - Amor vien aider. Takes A, B. Passed but finally rejected and made over on 4559. |
| 2/25/15 | 3605 | Von ewiger Liebe. Takes A, B. Hold then finally rejected. |
| 2/25/15 | 3606 | Don Carlos - O Don fatale. Takes A, B. Hold then rejected - "blasts" (A test pressing of take B is in the Edison Laboratory National Monument as file ED 351) |
| 3/2/15 | 3619 | Ah love but a day. Takes A, B Hold then rej. by Edison. (A test pressing of take B is in the Edison Laboratory National Monument as file ED 357. An Amberola master was made up but the selection was not issued - 2647. |
| 3/2/15 | 3620 | Prophete - Donnez donnez. Takes A, B. Hold then finally rej. |
| 3/5/15 | 3625 | Fidelio - Abscheulicher wo eilst. Takes A, B. Hold then finally passed by Edison. This selection was finally issued on 82276 and listed only in the German section of the general catalog. It was available to special order only. Listed in the catalog from 1922-29. |
| 3/5/15 | 3626 | Gioconda - Suicidio. Takes A, B. "Blasts" but passed. Later made over on 4558. |
| 4/1/15 | 3689 | Stabat Mater - Quis est homo (with Alice Verlet). Takes A, B, C. Passed & scheduled for 83031 but issued on 83082 listed 1919-29. Also dubbed onto cylinder -- Amberol 29036. |

- | | | |
|----------|------|---|
| 4/15/15 | 3709 | Contes de Hoffman - Barcarole (with Alice Verlet). Takes A, B, C. Passed and issued on 83032 listed 1916-29. |
| 3/6/16 | 4558 | Gioconda - Suicidio Takes A, B. Passed & issued on 83049 listed 1917-29. This was a remake of 3626. |
| 3/6/16 | 4559 | Samson et Dalila - Amour vien aider. Takes A, B. Passed & issued on 83044 listed 1917-1929. This was a remake of 3594. |
| 3/9/16 | 4569 | Aida - Fu la sorte dell armi (w. Marie Rappold). Takes A, B, C. Passed and scheduled for 83055 but there is no evidence that this disc was commercially issued. |
| 3/9/16 | 4570 | Trovatore - Stride la vampa. Takes A, B. Passed & issued on 83081 listed 1919-29. |
| 3/23/16 | 4603 | Orfeo ed Euridice - Che faro senza Euridice. Takes A & B. Passed & issued on 83050 listed 1918-24. |
| 3/23/16 | 4604 | Carmen - Les tringles des sistres. Takes A, B passed & issued on 82570 listed 1921-29. |
| 4/3/16 | 4627 | Lucrezia Borgia - Il segreto per esser felice. Takes A, B. Passed & issued on 83081 listed 1919-29. |
| 12 20/16 | 5224 | Lucia - Che mi frena (w. Marie Rappold, Giovanni Zenatello, Arthur Middleton, Thomas Chalmers & Enrico Baroni). Takes A, B, C. Hold then finally passed & issued on 82266 listed 1922-29. |

JUST RECEIVED!

3594 was scheduled for 83029
3606 was scheduled for 83027
3626 was scheduled for 83034
3689 was scheduled for 83031 was finally released on 83082.

It is evident from the number of remakes that the Edison technicians had a great deal of difficulty in capturing the Matzenauer voice.

By the time the Matzenauer recordings were made the Edison Company usually insisted that each artist make three perfect takes. Oddly most of the Matzenauer series exist in two takes. All takes were issued.

Another oddity is the fact that rerecordings were assigned new master numbers rather than new letter designations. It is possible that the accompaniment was different. The master listings do not indicate whether the artist is accompanied by piano or orchestra.

It is interesting to note that many of the Matzenauer recordings were held for some time before issuing them.

Frank Banta(cont'd from page 5)

You mentioned making piano rolls.

"Yes. Made many Duo-Art piano rolls for Aeolian. At that time, VINCENT YOUMANS worked in the roll department just to play the rolls. Wotta talent he was!"

Of course you also played with various recording bands and groups, too?

"Sure. But most record dates were with house bands. The name bands traveled in those days and I was doing all right in New York City. Was with the EIGHT POPULAR VICTOR ARTISTS. We did a Miniature Concert on a 12" Vi 35753. Went abroad with THE REVELERS in 1928, 1929 and 1931. Concertized in all European cities and played variety houses in Paris, Berlin and London.

That brings us through the '20s, Frank. And maybe we ought to call it quits for now. Thanks for all the interesting information. Now do you suppose you could play a couple of choruses of Say Mister Have You Met Rosie's Sister (she's a gal that's got it over Rosie!).

1894-1929

A. R. Danberg
Part 5

(Continued from Issue 27)

In succeeding catalogues the VICTOR MINSTREL series continues, called AN EVENING WITH THE MINSTRELS. Some of the earlier items are included and all the issue numbers are changed.

Date unknown:

C1021 Victor 31193 (single side)
AN EVENING WITH THE
MINSTRELS #3. End Song:
"Chimes of de Golden Bells"

May 1909 (& refers to the second side of the disc)

MNA Victor 35072 (12")
AN EVENING WITH THE
MINSTRELS #1
& AN EVENING WITH THE
MINSTRELS #4
Victor Minstrel Company

MNA Victor 35073 (12")
AN EVENING WITH THE
MINSTRELS #6 "Cakewalk in
Coontown

& AN EVENING WITH THE
MINSTRELS #8 "Scenes on
the Levee" Victor Minstrel Co

MNA Victor 16311 (10")
AN EVENING WITH THE
MINSTRELS #16 "Campmeeting
Time" & "L-O-V-E Spells
Trouble" Victor Minstrel Co.
& "Good Old Bill" - B. Murray

Victor 16258 - was Victor 5122
(June 1907)

February 1910:

MNA Victor 35095 (12")
VIRGINIA MINSTRELS
"Virginia" - "Humming Coon" -
Climb Up Little Chillun"
Victor Minstrel Company
& "Moonlite on the Lake"
Peerless Quartette

July 1910:

MNA Victor 35108 (12")
ALABAMA MINSTRELS
"Fly, Fly, Fly" - "My Rosie
Rambler" - "Linda"
Victor Minstrel Company
& "Old Heidelberg - A Trip up
the Rhine" Pryor's Band.

The Victor Catalogue for 1911 lists several additional minstrel records and combines some previously issued sides:

MNA Victor 16762 (10")
MINSTRELS #3 - was V31193
MINSTRELS #6 - was V35073

MNA Victor 16553 or 1834 (10")
MINSTRELS #1
MINSTRELS #4 - was V35072

MNA Victor 35149 (12")
MINSTRELS #3 - was V31193
& "When the Mocking Birds are
Singing in the Wildwood",
H. Macdonough.

MNA Victor 16763 (10")
MINSTRELS #8 - was V35072
& MINSTRELS #9 - was V5363

MNA Victor 16149 (12")
MINSTRELS #10 - was V5380
& "Moonlight on the Lake"
Peerless Quartette

MNA Victor 16925 (10")
MINSTRELS #11 - was V5449
& "Minstrel Band", Pryor's Band.

MNA Victor 16415 (10")
MINSTRELS #12 - was V5530
MINSTRELS #13 - was V5544

MNA Victor 16914 (10")
MINSTRELS #14
"Bye Bye" and "At the Meeting
House Tonight"
& MINSTRELS #15 - was V16263

MNA Victor 35183 (10")
MINSTRELS #17
"Carrie from Caroline" -
"Happy Days in Dixie" -
"That's How They Do It in
Balmoral" - Victor Minstrel Co.
& "A Night's Frolic", Pryor's
Band.

MNA Victor 35143 (12")
MINSTRELS #18
"A Hot Time in the Old Town"
"Good Bye, My Lady Love" -
"Dar's A Watermelon Spoilin'
Down At Johnson's"
& "Down on the Mississippi"
(Levee and Steamboat Scenes)
American Quartette.

MNA Victor 35197 (12")
GEORGIA MINSTRELS #19
"Golden Slippers" - "Dusky
Rose" - "Ain't Goin' to Weep
No Mo"
& Minstrel Scene: "At the
Telephone" Peerless Quartette

Additional listings in the Victor 1912 cata-
logue:

MNA Victor 35213 (12")
ARKANSAS MINSTRELS
"Alabama" - "Goodbye Eliza
Jane" - "What the Brass Band
Played"
& LOUISIANA MINSTRELS
"Push dem Clouds Away" -
"I Don't Care if Yo' Nebber
Come Back" - "Goodbye

Sweet Ole Manhattan Isle"
Victor Minstrel Company.

MNA Victor 35202 (12")
MINSTRELS #20
"In the Morning" - "Everybody
has a Whistle" - "Melancholy
Mose"
& "Whistling Pete" Minstrel
Specialty by Golden and Hughes.

MNA Victor 17126 (10")
MINSTRELS #21
"Just Because She Made Dem
Goo-Goo Eyes" - "When Daddy
Sings the Little Ones to Sleep"
"Southern Girl"
& "In Ragtime Land", A. Collins

MNA Victor 35233 (12")
MISSISSIPPI MINSTRELS #22
"I Guess I'll Have to Telegraph
My Baby" - "I Want to Go
Back" - "Remus Takes the
Cake"
& "Down on the Levee" Specialty
Peerless Quartet.

MNA Victor 35226 (12")
SOUTH CAROLINA MINSTRELS
"Bully Song" - "Black Jim" -
"Just Kiss Yourself Goodbye"
& TEXAS MINSTRELS
"Golden Wedding" - "Angel
Gabriel" "Bye Bye My Eva"
Victor Minstrel Company

Additional Records in Victor Catalogue for
1913: (The total minstrel list numbered 31
items!)

MNA Victor 35267 (12")
FLORIDA MINSTRELS
"I'll Come Back to You" - "I'm
Dreaming of You" - "Goodbye
Susan"
& "A Race for a Wife" (Racing
Specialty), Ada Jones and Len
Spencer.

MNA Victor 35260 (12")
KENTUCKY MINSTRELS
"My Gal is a High Born Lady" -
"My Dina" - "When You Ain't
Got No \$"
& Minstrel Specialty: "Working
on the Farm", Golden and Hughes

MNA Victor 35274 (12")
MILITARY MINSTRELS #26
"Yankee Doodle Boy" - "Bunker
Hill" "I'd Love to Lead a
Military Band"
& "Day with the Soldiers"
Peerless Quartette.

(To be Continued)

WHERE ARE THEY? Frank Kelly

FREDDY NAGEL -- the 30s West Coast society band leader--who had ELLES HORNE on tenor--owns a ranch in the mts. near Petaluma Cal...TONY DIPARDO & TOMMY REED--formed a talent booking office under their names in K.C., Mo. Tony also heads a frozen pizza concern...Tony & Tommy have their bands available...TED WEEMS (his brother--Art--recent passed away) lives in Dallas, Texas, and books out two-or-three days per week thru MCA. ART JARRETT--who strummed Guitar & blew Tram with TED WEEMS & also fronted his own bands--is living on Long Island -- and is in the orange fruit juice biz...AL KAVELIN is a music pub. with offices in H'wood...DON BESTOR is recovering from a series of eye operations--and living in Conn...JOE SANDERS -- of Coon-Sanders fame--spent a fortune on eye operation --and resides in K.C., Mo...GEORGE OLSEN--who tried to crash post war H'wood TV--currently operates his restaurant in Paramus, N.J.--a thriving community. KAY KYSER--who NEVER played ANYTHING--like Jackie Gleason--lives in Chapel Hill, N.C., where he's associated with the N.C. University faculty. ELMO TANNER -- who whistled with Ted Weems' band--lives in Birmingham, Ala--and fronts a small combo.

BOBBY MEEKER - who led a popular Chicago 30s band - owns a radio station in Houston, Texas. CLYDE McCOY owns a restaurant in Denver, Colo. - has oil & uranium holdings - fronts his Dixie combo - which he recently brought to NYC's Roundtable. LLOYD HUNTLEY - who led his "Isle of the Blue Orch" (where did he dream up that tag???) is on the faculty of Congate (isn't that his Alma Mammy???) WAYNE KING lives between a midwest farm & holdings in Arizona - which includes an auto rental agency in Phoenix & Tucson. He still records occasionally for Decca... EDDIE NIEBAUER - of Seattle Harmony Kings' fame - has a band working the Shutters Bros' Chicago ballroom. BIL CARLSON - is a TV weather man at a Milwaukee station... JOE KYSER is operating his own Chicago booking office - following his retirement from MCA several years ago... BEN POLLOCK - operates his H'wood restaurant on Sunset Blvd - which is popular with the musicians in L.A. DICK SHELTON is Chicago lawyer with a show biz following. SCOOPS CAREY - who blew reeds with EARL HINES - is a Windy City attorney. JIM LANIGAN is a service supt. in a Chicago suburban public school (what happened to he & the Chicago Sym. job??) RED INGLE who blew reeds, sang & fiddled with Ted Weems & Jean Goldkette - is a leather goods mfr. in Denver, Colo. Red tooled a bit of leather equipment for that Russian baller troupe. Red calls himself the Trumbauer of leather. SKEETER PALMER is in business in Denver... ANSON WEEKS has a band in Frisco's Palace hotel - with his old drummer- ABBEY BROWN-and his son, JACK- vocalizing & playing bass... HERB MILLER - Glen's brother - and father of WYNNE MILLER - budding B'way actress - heads the house band at the Ali Baba ballroom, Oakland, Calif. JOY COLYER lives in Denver, Colo. EDDY O'NIELL is accompanist for DOROTHY SHAW - the Park Ave. Hill Billy (originally - Dorothy Sims - who chirped with local bands in her native Jacksonville, Fla.). BILLY McDONALD is with Associated Booking's H'wood office. CLYDE & LYNN LUCAS are officials with a Miami, Fla. TV station... FREDDY BERGIN - who played with JEAN GOLDKETTE - and several years later fronted his own 30s band around Detroit, Chicago, Texas, the North East, etc. - currently lives in Denver, Colo. (he mrs. records for skating rinks - also engaged in research on early American ballads & Square Dance music (what a switch for a good hot piano man)

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO FRANK KELLY,
625 W. 169 STREET, NEW YORK NEW YORK

BLUES IN REVIEW by Barry Hansen

JOHN LEE HOOKER - Chess LP 1438
"House of the Blues"

Walkin' The Boogie; Love Blues; Union Station Blues; Leave My Wife Alone; Ramblin' By Myself; Sugar Mama; Down at the Landing; Louise; Ground Hog Blues; High Priced Woman (Vocals with el. guitar). It's My Own Fault; Women and Money (Vocals with el. guitar, piano & drums).

This new Chess album joins previous Audio-Lab and Vee-Jay albums in a mighty Hooker trilogy, containing much of the best work of one of the greatest blues singers of this or any age. No contemporary singer, and few in the past, have made commercial recordings so close to the primitive roots of the blues. Two badly distorted recordings with piano and a gimmicked WALKIN' THE BOOGIE have lesser appeal; but the nine remaining tracks are solo performances of commanding interest. The recordings are of a more professional nature than the very old Audio-Lab records, and Hooker sings mostly 12-bar blues instead of primitive chants as on the Audio-Lab, but this remains a stirring program of authentic blues, every one a masterful work of art with its own story to tell. Fine processing on the solo numbers, and attractive packaging.

HOWLIN' WOLF - Chess LP 1434
"Moanin' in the Moonlight"

Moanin' at Midnight; How Many More Years; Smokestack Lightning; Baby, How Long; No Place to Go; All Night Boogie; Evil; I'm Leavin' You; Moanin' For My Baby; I asked for Water; Forty-Four; Somebody In My Home.

Little needs to be said about the music on this LP; most or all of these fine performances will be familiar to any collector of contemporary blues in single-record form. The whole gamut of the Wolf's repertoire is represented here; each selection is a world in itself. His greatest through 1958 are here -- SMOKE STACK LIGHTNING, I ASKED FOR WATER, MOANIN' AT MIDNIGHT, and nine more of scarcely less interest. The LP processing is excellent. Southern blues, well selected and well packaged, with excellent notes, such as it is here, will appeal to a large and discriminating audience of folk-music collectors who would be likely to pass by the same material on singles.

JIMMY REED--Vee-Jay 333
58-922 CARESS ME BABY (J. Reed) Conrad-BMI
59-1211 BABY WHAT YOU WANT ME TO DO (J. Reed)

Conrad-BMI
Vocals with el. guitars, harmonica, drums
Other blues artists have their ups and downs, but Jimmy Reed just rolls right along. CARESS ME BABY is a beautiful piece much in the style of the memorable LITTLE RAIN of 1957. Soft, sweet harmonica, a very attractive far-off guitar affect, and warm, inviting singing add up to a highly listenable side. The reverse, a vocal duet between Reed and an unbilled female vocalist who blends well with him, is also very effective; the natural rhythm of the lyrics just carries this easy-paced blues right along. This is about Reed's twentieth Vee-Jay single, and, like all the rest, it's fine blues.

ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO BARRY HANSEN
1963 SHERIDAN AVE. SO., MINNEAPOLIS MINN.

from Donald Russell Connor

In the March/April issue of Record Research, Carl Kendziora commented on some of the material in my book, "BG -- Off the Record." Since an author rarely has a chance to rebut criticism of his work, I'm delighted that the editors of RR have granted me just that unique opportunity.

First, let me clear my typewriter of a redundancy of !!!!! Neither this essay -- nor Kendziora's -- contains material worthy of an excess of exclamatory punctuation. Now, then:

To my mind, there is implicit upon publication an author's acknowledgment and consent that his work be critically reviewed. At most, he dare hope for approbation; but at the least, he is entitled to no less than objective analysis, substantive in character. These latter qualities should approach full realization in reviews of material of a factual nature, as opposed to that of purely fictional work; and it becomes the more incumbent upon a critic who represents himself as an authority on the material under scrutiny, to discharge honestly this obligation.

It is here that I take issue with Kendziora.

For Carl Kendziora is a long-time Goodman enthusiast, and I acknowledge in a foreword to my book my indebtedness to his Goodman discographical efforts, published in the now defunct Record Changer. Those articles, 'though fragmentary and shot thru' with error, were the inspiration for "BG -- Off the Record." Moreover, that portion of the manuscript of "BG -- etc." that deals with Goodman's pre-1935 work was submitted in rough, and in instalment, for his comment, corrections and additions -- and these were gratefully received. To that extent, then, he helped to contribute and to examine the material now under criticism; but as author, I accept final responsibility for all of it.

To the review:

The bulk of Kendziora's article deals with seven Kirkeby dates -- those of 5-23-29; 6-20-30; 11-3-30; 12-30-30; 1-27-31; 2-13-31 and 8-21-31 -- which can now be ruled definite non-BG dates. It is completely true that I include these dates in "BG -- Off The Record;" but it is equally true -- and conspicuously absent from K's monograph -- that each and every one of these dates is qualified, in the book, by comment ranging from "probable" thru "doubtful" to "remote possibility." Not one is listed as a Goodman certainty. Indeed, my personal choice for clarinetist on the first date is noted, in the book, as Pumiglio, and such it has proven to be; and elsewhere I do say "... and the general belief that Goodman seldom recorded with Ed Kirkeby seems to hold up."

The Kirkeby datebook that details these sessions has but recently been available; at the time "BG -- etc." was in the works, this datebook was unknown to me, to my other correspondents, and I assume to K. Balancing one opinion against another, giving weight to a majority opinion, I frankly speculated and made a choice; it is obvious now I should have let the doubts prevail. But I was fully aware that even my "very probables" were not certainties, and I so wrote. To imply, as K's article does by its omission of my expressed qualifications, that I recommended those dates without reservation, is something less than honest review.

The Thesaurus hassle: Did Benny & Band cut 51-plus "Rhythm Makers" tunes in one session, as K contends (citing as his authority Pee Wee Erwin), or in several sessions, as I believe? The following seem worthy of consideration:

This question evidently still cannot be resolved at the source, for a recent letter from Ben Selvin, A&R manager of Victor's Custom Record Division ("Thesaurus & Syndicated Sales"), reaffirms that these details are not in Victor's files.

A recent 'phone conversation with Pee Wee Erwin, who is identifiable on some of the sides, reveals that although he is "almost certain" that all the tunes were cut in one session; that he "feels sure" that he cut all the jazz solos for the trumpet section; and that this session "sticks in his mind" -- that he does not have, or cannot now locate, HIS datebook for that period; and that he

has never heard, via the ETs, all of the tunes, nor any of them recently.

As Pee Wee recalls, recording practice in the mid-Thirties was to cut each tune on a separate disc; and each tune was assigned a different matrix. Thus, to my mind, 51 tunes - 51 discs - 51 matrices; ergo, the 13 consecutive matrices assigned to the seven original BG/RM ETs were pressing matrices, not recording matrices.

Union policy in the mid-Thirties (to the best of Pee Wee's recollection) limited a recording session to three hours; but he is not certain if this policy held true for recording done for ultimate release on transcription.

Fifty-one different BG/RM tunes were released; how many were cut and not released is anybody's guess, for Benny's book then contained more than 51 arrangements. And I can think of no other example in recording history when a full band, and a "rehearsal" band at that (by Pee Wee's definition), waxed a minimum of 51 arranged manuscripts in one recording session -- although Pee Wee remembers cutting a "slew" of tunes in one session, some years later, with Isham Jones.

I suggested to K in an earlier discussion that there logically must have been more than one take cut for at least some of the tunes; now I find my contention boomeranging in K's a priori, "Of course, there was only one take for each." Again: I can find no other example when any group cut 51 arrangements without objectionable mistake, false start, fluff, missed intro, faulty recording apparatus, etc., nothing wrong thru' 51 arrangements.; this offends my credulity. And by way of pertinent example, I am informed that there are released alternate takes of a Shaw RM arrangement.

Thus the bulk of K's criticism, but these odds and ends merit comment:

Goody & His Good Timers "Stardust" date of Nov., 1928: again, Kendziora omits mention of my "much disputed" and "Majority of informed opinion is that Benny did NOT make this date ..." qualifications -- in the book.

Kay Penton's vocal on the unissued CO mx 34713-1, -2: Oh, I blew this one, possibly during proofreading, for I had the damn' tests when I wrote the mss. But this kind of thing sometimes happens to even the most meticulous of us, e.g. Kendziora's allusion to Sterling Bose, replete with !, on a "Nov. 2nd." date on page 100 of my book. Uh-uh, no Nov. 2nd. date on page 100 of MY book.

Adrian Rollini's non-participation on some dates I list: my opinion, supported in part by correspondence I've gotten since publication of "BG -- Off The Record," is that this kind of detail is of but minor consequence to most BG collectors; their primary concern centers on Benny's presence. Personally, I'd extend this to that of major artists, like Bix or Tea. But then I'm not meticulous.

Different composer credits on different pressings: ugh.

Additional releases to those already catalogued: Let me burden this diatribe once again with a personal opinion -- I deem VII, JapLucky, reissue COM, etc., these kinds of additions, of little relative value to the collector, for they add nothing new matrix-wise or take-wise to Goodman's work already delineated. My files are filled with this stuff -- I don't intend to use it -- and I have in the past offered it to K. Better for all that time devoted to this kind of research -- or criticism -- be channeled into unearthing wholly new material.

But if we must add these things, let's for Heaven's sake be meticulous: Add, as K suggests, LI 3112 to matrix 3621-c, the Dixie Daisies date of "Approx. Jan." (that's pretty close to February) 1929; then too, add LI 3101 to matrix 3622-c of the same date. But don't quit yet: add matrix 3620-b to the same date, with its CA-RO-LI releases, and thus include a BG item Connor missed completely. For details, see Howard Waters' upcoming Tea disco. Not only does Howard make this addition,

from Carl Kendziora

The editors have asked us to comment on Don Connor's remarks. Normally we do not believe in these articles where one writer blasts another ad nauseum as we used to find in the old "Record Changer" issue after issue and our first impression was to decline. However, after reading Don's article, we felt there were a couple of points worthy of mention and in need of clarification; hence, these words.

The major point we wish to make is that our comments in the "Behind The Cobwebs" column in the March/April issue of this magazine were neither a "book review" nor "criticism" as Don seems to imply! We offered "some corrections, comments and additions" to the book; no more, no less. The corrections and additions are important (whether the items involved are "probable" or not) as any discography should be as accurate as possible. The comments are our opinion and open to dispute by anyone with other views. Since we were not doing an article, but simply using part of a column for the BG data, we did not go into detail and hence did not mention whether Don had various dates listed as "probable," "possible," "doubtful" or what have you (except for the one on page 52 which he had as "probable" but then stated that the alto sax solo seemed "unmistakable." This seemed so contradictory that we mentioned it). On the Kirkeby dates: These appointment and payroll books of Ed's have only recently become available and it was no criticism of Don or anyone that this data was not in his book ... Just the desire, now that it is known, to have everything completely correct!

Now to take up Don's points. The seven Kirkeby dates: We've mentioned why we didn't go into detail over Don's various qualifications for these dates, suffice to say that we felt that now that it was possible to factually rule them out as Goodman items, we would do so. We offered the exact personnels in the belief that things should be as complete as possible regardless of whether most Goodman fans cared to know more than whether Benny was on the date or not. Frank Dutton, of England, and others, wrote with notes on what appeared to be possible or definite errors. This prompted a thorough study of our column and, to our dismay, we found that typos and/or gremlins had gotten in somewhere between our manuscript and the final printed column! Our regrets to all, and here are the corrections: June 20, 1930 - This is correct as printed, there is no trombonist listed in Kirkeby's payroll book. Nov. 3, 1930 - There certainly is a bass which somehow got left out in the printed column. It is Ward Ley. As to Frank's query whether "Dick Dixon" (Vocal) is Dick Robertson, we don't know. The payroll book has "Dick Dixon" and nothing else. On the page 59 Kirkeby date of Jan. 27, 1931 - Ed Farley is correct but the "(tb)" is a typo! It should be "(tp)" of course. There is no trombonist listed. Whether the "Allen or Albin" who is listed on trombone on the Aug. 21, 1931 date is the same fellow as the "Allen" listed by Woody Backensto as playing tuba on the California Ramblers' July 15, 1927 date for Edison (Page 7 of the March/April issue), we just don't know. The names of the musicians listed in Kirkeby's payroll books are handwritten entries (last names only, in most cases). When Perry Armagnac, who did the laborious work of transcribing this data, was unable to make them out or was uncertain of their first names, he asked Mr. Kirkeby. In most cases Ed was able to give the correct last name and to add the first name and instrument played. In this case he could recall neither an Allen or Albin (the two spellings the handwritten entry suggested). By a process of elimination he decided he must be the trombone (Hardly be on tuba with Ward Ley on bass).

The Thesaurus business: We have talked to Pee Wee Erwin numerous times and have requested him many times over this and he has always insisted the whole batch were cut in one session. Art Rollini recently made the same statement to a friend of ours in a conversation. As to our statement that only one take was cut

of each tune, would they have released some of those clinkers and fluffs which are to be found on some of the Thesaurus titles if there had been alternate takes? Pee Wee also stated that they "ran thru most of the book, once each." Of course there may have been false starts or mechanical breakdowns. Obviously they would have to stop and start again. But would an incomplete cut be given a take number? As for Artie Shaw alternate takes, RCA may have changed policy by the time Shaw cut his titles. He didn't have a band in Spring 1935 when Goodman cut the 51 titles. But, at any rate, we are only going by what George Erwin has told us. If he's wrong so are we.

That date where we named Sterling Bose as the trumpeter was Nov. 22, 1933 on our manuscript but, when it reached the printed column, one of the twos got chopped off. And, we neglected to note, the violinist has been mentioned as Matty Malneck by at least one discographer.

Now we come to another very important point! It is unimportant whether one, or all but one, of the BG collectors thinks it of minor consequence as to Rollini (or any other specific musician) being missing from a date in which he is listed as present in the book! What is important is that, if a personnel is printed, it should be correct! If Connor deems it unimportant (or believes his readers do) beyond Benny's presence, then he shouldn't list the rest of the personnel! If he does, then any errors should and will be corrected by anyone who has the information at hand! We believe that personnels should be listed in full (insofar as possible, naturally) in all discographies whether general or just for one artist or group. And who says Adrian Rollini isn't a major artist?

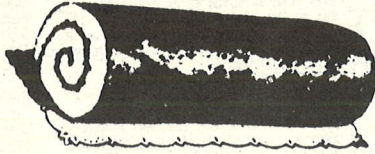
On composer credits: We are not inclined to get excited over whether they are included or not (although we prefer to include them). But, if they are included, any variation is worthy of note. We offered the note of the different composer credit on the one title (we have both records) just for the passing interest of collectors and find it hard to understand Connor's "ugh" when he indulged in such variant credits in his own text. Like on page 98 (variant credit on "In De Ruff"), page 109 ("Stars Fell On Alabama"), page 126 ("Madhouse" -- and it is not consistent that the variations follow the takes used -- our copies reverse those Don cites), page 136 ("Vibraphone Blues" -- and we have a copy of the "Swing Classic" label with solo Hampton credit!), page 163 ("What Goes On Here In My Heart?"), etc.

This brings us the last major point, additional releases: At this point we differ completely with Connor! We feel (and all of our fellow researchers and discographers with whom we work closely agree) that all additional issues merit listing and when new ones turn up they should be added. This may not be of interest to Don, but we will continue to offer additional issues to any and all discographies extant. Now, since Don brought it up, let's get these Lincoln issues documented! (We had offered Li 3112 simply because we had just picked up a copy and could verify take and credits). First, on page 10, the Li issue for Ca 9004 & Ro 808 should be 3033; on page 11, for Ca 9012 & Ro 816 the Li issue should be 3041 and change that Li 3062 for Ca 9034 & Ro 838 to Li 3063 (Li 3062 is Henderson's Happy Six Orch. doing "Old Black Joe's Blues" (3491-a) and Bob Haring & His Orch. with "All By Yourself In The Moonlight" (3557-a), also change Li 3054 to Li 3064 for Ca 9035 & Ro 839. Page 17 is devoid of a single Lincoln issue so let's add them: For Ca 9041 & Ro 845 the Li should be 3070, for 9043 & 847 it should be 3072, for 9042 & 846 it should be 3071, for 9045 & 849 it should be 3074, for 9046 & 850 (NOT 856) it should be 3075 and for 9047 & 851 it is 3076. Finally, to page 21 for some more: For Ca 9126 & Ro 928 the Li issue should be 3153, for 9174 & 976 it should be 3201, for 9147 & 949 it should be 3174 and for 9130 & 932 it should be 3157. Yes, let's be meticulous ... Of course, add the new master (3620-b), but we can't do that 'til we learn the details, which

(continued on page 24)

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Zacc -(cont'd from page 16)

like that, because it certainly was not true at all. First of all Zutty explained to me, "I was eighteen or better when I used to see Baby on the boat, and that's no kid. Secondly, the first drummer ever to inspire me was 'Old Man' Cottrell, not Dodds. Guys like Cottrell, Walter Brundy, Paul Detroit, Henry Zeno, and Henry Martin were whom I used to watch, and who taught me so many things about the drums. Sure, I seen Baby a few times, but his style was much too wild for me, and I wasn't interested in that kind of drumming, so I don't know where Baby ever got the idea he inspired me, and I never said to my Uncle Willie Botemps, 'I wonder will I ever be able to drum like that fellow. Baby must have thought that up about me.'" This writer was asked by Zutty to please print the above, so that those who have read the book will know his side of it, and what he knows to be true.

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Coming: A revision of Tony Parenti's
discography which appeared in issue 28.

Al Bowlly (cont'd from page 8)

It is fortunate that most of Bowlly's work was with the fabulous Noble groups, and for Noble, 'fabulous' was no flattery. His arrangements remain today breath-takingly original and these were miraculously transposed into interpretations the like of which has never been equaled anywhere by anyone, including Noble himself, and this holds good of his HMV recordings only, although Bowlly's efforts continued unimpaired during his American sojourn. Nevertheless, in spite of the bewildering decline of Noble in the U.S., he went on to provide strikingly original backgrounds for his singer, and there may never again be as perfect a rapport between singer and accompaniment as existed between Noble and Bowlly. A great deal of this was due, of course, not only to the fact that Noble could achieve the impossible in getting out of his musicians the wondrous effects behind Bowlly, but also because Noble is the composer of some of the finest pop. songs ever written and an arranger of superlative imagination. If Bowlly had not decided to return permanently to England, what might have happened? Nothing very much, I am afraid. Not being a personality boy like the mid-thirties crop, very likely he would not have been a popular favorite with the public; the Noble American Band would, regardless, have continued its dismaying decline, and nothing Al Bowlly did would have made very much difference. The split would inevitably have come, and perhaps not very much later, and Al might have become a prestige artist on some minor label... and this would inevitably have led to his return to England in any event, for there he was sure of a strong welcome and steady and profitable employment, which he enjoyed from the moment of his un-hypothetical return until the Blitz caught up with him at the height of its fury and put an end to his illustrious career in London on April 17, 1941.